

THE GLASS APPEAL

EPISODE 1: TRADE SECRET

Written by

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JASON

The wealth gap in the fractured United States is horrible. The rich have access to everything, including new life-saving procedures, while the poor are stuck with age-old fixes. That's where we come in, the Tinkers. What we do isn't for ourselves. It's for those less fortunate and the betterment of humanity.

SFX: Jail door closing.

SFX: Opening theme.

SFX: News show theme.

EMILIA

(enthusiastic)

Breaking news! This just in. The bio-terrorist that was wrecking havoc overseas has been transferred to the tinker section of the Confederacy Penitentiary supermax prison. He was released into their custody a few weeks ago, but the information of his transfer was just released. That's it for now. We'll update ya'll more when we have more information.

SFX: Ending news show theme.

INT. UNITED STATES PENITENTIARY - AFTERNOON

ALEXANDER

Do you consent to being recorded at all times during your visit.

BRIAN

Even during my visitation?

ALEXANDER

There are no audio recording devices placed within the visitation rooms. If you agree to these terms please sign here.

SFX: Brian signs.

BRIAN

Anything else?

ALEXANDER

No, that's it. Follow me.

SFX: Brian and Alexander are walking over a semi wet floor. An occasionally banging on jail cells will be heard.

BRIAN

So...

ALEXANDER

What is it?

BRIAN

What's it like being a prison guard to tinkers?

ALEXANDER

That is none of your concern.

BRIAN

Gotcha...

ALEXANDER

We've arrived.

SFX: They stop walking. A door is opened.

INT. THE GLASS ROOM - AFTERNOON

SFX: The buzz of a flickering light will always be in the background along with the occasional drop of water falling onto the ground.

BRIAN

Thanks. How much time do we have?

ALEXANDER

Just keep it short. I'll be back shortly.

SFX: The door is closed.

BRIAN

Real keeper that one.

SFX: Brian walks for a bit and reaches a chair. He pulls back the chair and sits down.

SFX: They both pickup phones from their receivers.

JASON

Hey.

BRIAN  
Is that all you've got to say?

JASON  
Umm. How are you doin-

BRIAN  
You know exactly what I mean, damn  
it.

(beat)  
No, I don't mean "*How are you.*" I  
want to know why. Why'd you lie?

JASON  
(surprised)  
Lie about what?

BRIAN  
Are you serious right now?

JASON  
Brian, what you're talking about.

BRIAN  
Just think for a sec. Where are you  
right now.

JASON  
Are we really doing this right now?  
You see exactly where I am.

BRIAN  
Just humor me.

JASON  
Prison.

BRIAN  
Good. Now, why are you here?

JASON  
I'm here as an example. I'm here  
for a crime I didn't commit.

BRIAN  
Jason.  
(beat)  
You've been locked up for months  
and you still think you're  
innocent?

JASON

Not think. Know. I *know* I'm innocent. Is that why you're here? You're here to criticize me?

BRIAN

No. I'm here to know why my damn friend lied to me for *years*.

JASON

I never lied to you. I just... never told you that I was a tinker.

BRIAN

And that makes it better? Do you know what it was like to hear about one of the biggest terrorist cases ever who was also a tinker?

(deeply sighs)

Man, you don't know how happy I was hearing that the government finally got one of them. It proved that biowarfare was possible by tinkers.

(beat)

However, The person I just cheered going to prison, was actually my friend. One of the closet friends I had no less.

JASON

Brian I--

BRIAN

(angry)

No. I don't care what you have to say. You don't get to say anything to me right now.

JASON

You don't understand.

BRIAN

Understand what? You *don't* understand how it felt to be betrayed by someone you've grown up with. You were going to be my best man. You know that?

SFX: Silence.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Are you going to say something?

JASON

Oh? I can talk now? You want to hear what I have to say?

BRIAN

Jay, I'm being serious here.

JASON

I am too. I never wanted you to find out about it this way. Honestly, I didn't want you to find out at all.

BRIAN

So what. You were just never going to tell me. You were just going to let me believe that everything was alright while you did... whatever it is you do?

JASON

Whatever it is I do? What the hell does that mean? Everything was fine between us. The only thing that changed was that you learned I was a tinker.

BRIAN

And you don't think that that's enough? You can't think that everything can go back to being normal between us, right? Let's not forget the fact that you're *now in jail*. Don't forget about that "Mr. I'm innocent"

JASON

(hurt)

You can't actually think that I did it can you? Like do you *really* believe that I'm capable of doing the things they've said?

BRIAN

Honestly, I don't know. I feel like I don't know you anymore.

JASON

Really? That's it. That's how you answer. "*I don't know*" no, fuck that.

BRIAN

What else do you want me to say?

JASON

I can't tell you what to say, but I can ask you to believe me.

(beat)

I didn't do it.

BRIAN

So, you didn't go abroad with Tinkers International?

JASON

You're not getting wh-- argh.

(beat)

I did go abroad with tint, but--

BRIAN

But what? You were with them. I don't need to say anything else.

JASON

Okay.

(beat)

Yes, I was with them and I did go abroad, *but* it was to help those in need.

BRIAN

(incredulous)

You went to help people? Really? Is that what you'd call what happened in all those countries that you visited? Helping?

(beat)

Wow. The meaning of the word must've changed last time I used it.

JASON

Can you listen to me?! I already said that I did go abroad with them, but I didn't join in on any of the crimes they committed.

BRIAN

You expect me to believe that you lived and travelled with these guys and didn't know anything?

JASON

It's not that simple. You can't imagine how many people I was able to--

BRIAN

I don't care how many people you were able to save. What I care about is the fact that you were with them and didn't do anything to stop them.

JASON

First of all I didn't *let* them do anything. I--

BRIAN

I honestly don't care. We're done talking about this.

JASON

No, we're not done talking about this.

BRIAN

Yes we are. If not I'll just leave. I don't *need* to be here.

JASON

Well, then I guess I'll say my thanks.

BRIAN

Thanks for what? Yelling at you?

JASON

No. For being the first person to visit me.

BRIAN

Stop joking Jay. You've been here for months. There's no way your family or husband hasn't visited you.

SFX: Silence.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(surprised)

Damn that's harsh.

JASON

(agitated)

You're telling me. I really don't want to talk about it.

BRIAN

Okay okay. I won't talk about your shitty husband and you won't preach your stupid ideals to me either.

JASON

He's a really good guy and he's probably swamped with work and hasn't had the time to come. He's running for governor.

(beat)

Also, my ideals aren't stupid. They're fo--

BRIAN

The betterment of humanity. Yeah yeah. Whatever Jay. I've heard it all before. I'm tired of it. And really? You're defending him after being alone in jail for how many months without a single visit from him. He's at least called you?

JASON

Well, I bet he would if he could.

BRIAN

You're still defending him Jay? That's the *least* he could do. Are you--

JASON

(defensive)

I'm not defending him this time. As a tinker I have less rights than normal prisoners.

BRIAN

Wait really?

JASON

Yeah, I mean have you seen this place? I also don't get as much visitation time as other inmates either.

BRIAN

How much longer do we have left then?

JASON

I don't know. Alexander will come in whenever he wants and tell us to stop.

BRIAN  
So like a baby-sitter?

JASON  
Exactly like one.

BRIAN  
(chuckling)  
I mean at least you don't need to pay for food or bills.

JASON  
It's not as good as you make it sound.

BRIAN  
Yeah, I know. Sorry about that.

JASON  
It's fine. It's not like its your fault that I'm here, but you are kind of enjoying it.

BRIAN  
(defensive)  
Hey. I said I was happy about the conviction *before* I heard your name. I'm not happy that you're in here. Angry, yes. But I don't want you to rot in here. I've heard things about this place.

JASON  
I've seen what the other guards do to other inmates. The non-tinker ones at least. Sometimes we'll cross to the other sections and well... it ain't good. Good thing I'm in this wing at least.

BRIAN  
Seems like your guard isn't too bad too. A bit uptight though.

JASON  
Yeah, he's a stickler for the rules.  
(beat)  
Now did you really come all this way *just* to yell at me?

BRIAN

I mean I *did* come to vent, but it wasn't the main reason. I want some fucking answers.

JASON

How are you going to get answers if you don't want to talk about it?

BRIAN

Well, who said today was my last visit?

JASON

You want to come back and talk?

BRIAN

Well, yeah. Regardless of what you did or didn't do you're still like family.

JASON

Thanks. I appreciate it, bro.

BRIAN

Yeah. Why'd you become a tinker anyway?

JASON

I already told you. It was for--

BRIAN

I don't want to hear any of that bullshit. Give me something else.

JASON

(sigh)

Okay. Let me ask you a question first. What do you think about tinkering?

BRIAN

Well, for one it's dangerous. The government's said that messing or modifying with your biology could be harmful to everyone. Like if you get some special tinker disease it could spread like crazy.

JASON

That's just crazy talk. We're not changing our bodies *that* much. It's not like we're a different species or anything.

BRIAN

Okay, but tinkers could also manufacture a deadly pathogen that targets non-tinkers.

JASON

Anyone could do that.

BRIAN

Whatever. I just think that *harmful* pathogens should be contained and minimized as much as possible to stop diseases.

JASON

I agree with that, but what if I was to tell you that a lot of tinkers *do* prevent harmful pathogens from being spread?

BRIAN

How do you know that all of them do?

JASON

We have our own rules of conduct and we measure the output levels of whatever is released and make sure they're in acceptable ranges.

BRIAN

And what happens if they aren't in acceptable ranges?

JASON

Not necessarily. If the tinker is smart then they have a contamination policy. Usually they'd have a way to clear out any contaminants.

BRIAN

See. You just said *smart* tinkers. That's just it though. Isn't that the problem? You guys aren't doctors. So, what makes you think you have the right to put everyone else in danger?

JASON

Well, they're *our* bodies. You guys can't regulate what we can do to our bodies just because you don't agree with it.

BRIAN

The moment that you start affecting all of us then yes, we can dictate what you can and can't do.

JASON

I swear you never listen to anything I say. The majority of tinkers are careful with their experiments.

BRIAN

Then can you explain the current outbreak we have in the south then?

JASON

I don't know much about the Calsmine Virus.

(beat)

I don't even think it was made by terrorists.

BRIAN

(angry)

Are you saying the virus is fake then?

SFX: Brian hastily stands up, pushing his chair back.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Mr. Bennett got it and he's been in the hospital ever since.

JASON

(sigh)

I'm getting tired of this shit Brian. I'm not saying that the virus is fake, but what I am saying is have you ever thought that maybe just *maybe* it wasn't caused by tinkers?

BRIAN

(confused)

No? Why the hell would that cross my mind?

JASON

Well, who's the other group that can create such a virus?

BRIAN

Ummm. There's the hospitals, and I guess the government.

JASON

See exactly.

BRIAN

Exactly what? It's not as though those two created the virus. I mean what would they even gain by doing that?

JASON

Really? You have to ask that? Come on Brian. What could the government or the hospitals possibly gain from manufacturing a virus?

SFX: Brian grabs his chair forward and sits back down.

BRIAN

I don't know.

SFX: Silence for a beat.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I guess they could then manufacture a cure and make people pay a shit ton of money for it? But, that's all just conspiracy theories. There's no evidence for that.

JASON

Is there any evidence that it was caused by a tinker?

(beat)

I wouldn't know since I've been trapped in here for a while, but you can go research it.

BRIAN

And why would I want to do research for you?

JASON

You don't *have* to, but it'd probably help you and your bias against tinkers if it was true.

BRIAN

I don't have a bias against tinkers. What they do is dangerous for all of us and it should be left to the professionals.

JASON

See you do have a bias against us.  
Let me tell you something to mull  
over before you leave.

BRIAN

What?

JASON

Remember when Hank was really sick.

BRIAN

Yeah, I remember. He wasn't able to  
get out of bed some days.

JASON

Yeah, I remember you not wanting to  
come in.

BRIAN

Well yeah. I hated seeing him like  
that. All defenseless and shit.  
There was that one time I *did* come  
in to say hi and whatnot and well  
you know...

JASON

Yeah... I remember what happened.  
It wasn't pretty.

BRIAN

That does something to a guy ya  
know?

JASON

You're telling me. You weren't the  
only one who hated seeing him like  
that. You also didn't have to live  
with him. You barely came over  
after that.

BRIAN

I know. Don't think I ever  
apologized for that. Sorry man.

JASON

It's cool.

BRIAN

It's good that he's better thanks  
to that surgeon.

JASON

(laughs)

BRIAN

What?

JASON

That's where I was going with this.  
You really think a surgeon would  
have operated on Hank for free?

BRIAN

Obviously not.

JASON

Did you know how much he wanted?  
How much he valued my brother's  
life at?

BRIAN

(sheepishly)

No...

JASON

All I'll say is that there was no  
way we could have gotten that much  
money. Not in my parent's or even  
my lifetime.

BRIAN

Wait? Then that means...

JASON

You guessed it. I did everything I  
could. I used my connections to try  
and save Hank which worked, but not  
without some consequences.

BRIAN

Such as?

JASON

That's for another time. Anyway, I  
searched through all of the black  
clinics. I was finally able to find  
one that was able to accurately  
diagnose him and have the proper  
tools.

BRIAN

What do you mean accurately  
diagnose him? Didn't you and your  
family already know what was wrong  
with him since you went to an  
actual hospital?

JASON

Well yeah, but like you said we're not doctors or bio-engineers. So, I used his diagnosis as a sort of screening test for the black clinics.

BRIAN

You've been saying that word. Black clinic. What do you mean by that?

JASON

Hold on. You dislike tinkers, but you don't even know one of the most basic things about them? It's like one of the first things that pop-up on Google when you search about tinkers.

BRIAN

Shut up! Are you going to tell me or are you just going to make fun of me.

JASON

I can't do both?

BRIAN

Jason.

JASON

Okay okay. A black clinic is as you would guess a clinic except they're a front for tinker operations. They have everything a tinker would need from tools and supplies to the latest information on a certain procedure or equipment.

BRIAN

You sure you should be telling me this?

JASON

Like I said. This is basic shit.

BRIAN

How do you guys stay unnoticed by the government? It has to be something really elaborate since they haven't been caught yet.

JASON  
(chuckling)  
I can't tell you that.

BRIAN  
Why not?

JASON  
Trade secret.

BRIAN  
Come on Jay.

JASON  
Why don't you go and become one if  
you're so damn interested. And you  
think I'd tell you something like  
*that* here?

BRIAN  
You know I can't do that.

JASON  
Can't or won't?

BRIAN  
Well, they're the same thing here.  
Since either way I'm not going to  
join your merry gang of hackers.

JASON  
Whatever. Suit yourself, since  
you're not getting that out of me.

BRIAN  
(angrily)  
Fine then.

SFX: Brian gets up from his chair.

JASON  
Wait.

BRIAN  
What is it?

JASON  
Thanks for coming bro. I really  
appreciated it.

BRIAN  
Yeah yeah. I'll see you around.

JASON

You too.

SFX: They both place their phones on their receivers.

End of episode.